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THE POT OF GOLD
AND OTHER POEMS



AMELIE SHAW



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With Compliments of

Amelia Shaw,
Hollywood.

(January 1st
1923.)

THE POT OF
GOLD AND
OTHER
POEMS

By Amelie Shaw

1919

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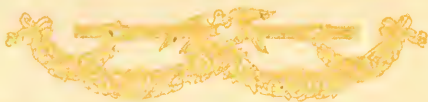
*To my Beloved Husband,
JOHN AUSTIN SHAW,
who by a lifetime of devotion
has inspired My Work*

A. S.



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The Pot of Gold



THE CHILD:

WHO buried the big pot
of gold
At the foot of the rain-
bow old?
I shall search, I shall search till
I find it,
And into gold-dust I will grind
it,
To gild everything that I see
And make it look lovely to me.
I care not how long it may take
This wonderful fortune to make.
I have so many years all before
me,
And there are no clouds hang-
ing o'er me;

So today, and tomorrow, and
the next
I shall search, and I shall not
be vex'd
If I find it not till long after;
I'll beguile all the way with
bright laughter,
With sweet song, and sunshine,
and play.
I shall not grow weary all day;
For the butterflies, flowers and
bees,
And the birds all atune in the
trees,
And the squirrels, so cunning
and shy,
That scamper so when you come
nigh,
Will all be my playmates and
friends
Till I come where the rainbow
ends.
And then there's the gay mead-
ow brook,
That skips past many a nook,
And stops in its onward course
never,
But sings and flows on forever.
I can gather a few scattered chips
Out of these I can fashion fine
ships,

And launch them upon the swift
stream;
Then the fish in its waters that
gleam
Will tempt me to linger and play.
Thus the time will pass quickly
away,
And my heart be both happy
and bold
All the way to the big pot of
gold!

YOUTH:


Today I am twenty years old,
But as yet---no pot of gold,
Dazzling with its yellow sheen,
Hath by my longing eyes been
seen.
That rainbow cheated me all the
way---
It faded long before noonday,
And left me staring at the sky,
With no landmark to travel by.
Many times it reappeared
And my infant fancy cheered.
Then quickly vanished from my
view,
Leaving me without a clue.
But in the sunshine of the hours

The Pot of
Gold

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I had my gold in generous show-
ers;
And thus the rainbow pointed
not
To greater wealth than I had got.
And all the way to the pot of
gold
Were pleasures that could not
be bought or sold.
Those joys are o'er; they could
not last,
But vanished with my child-
hood's past.
Though but a legend, it is true,
I've still the pot of gold in view,
And the many-tinted bow of
hope
Still leads me on, with fate to
cope.

MIDDLE-AGE:

 **F**OR many years with heart
and mind,
That pot of gold I've
strove to find.
But it eludes me with a
trick
Of disappearing all too quick,

Serenely showing up again
At the far end of the bow of
rain.

Ah, then how bright my path-
way seems!

How near the substance of my
dreams!

My heart grows light, my step
more firm,

And life seems one long happy
term.

Then sudden the bright scene
is chang'd,

Nature herself seems all deranged;
The heavenly tints fade one by
one;

Dark clouds arise and veil the
sun.

I've toiled by the light of those
fitful flashes

To the bitter end, and found but
ashes!

The bow of morn and eve and
noon


Alike are false and hold no boon.

Delusive hope, thou art for-
sworn!

Thy path is strewn with wrecks
forlorn;

You lure us on with promise
fair
While o'er our heads, swung by
a hair,
The sword of fate is seen to pend,
A warning of our destined end.
I would paint you with a mask
Fair as anyone could ask,
But transparent as the mist
By the morning sunshine kiss'd!
While underneath this guise so
fair
Your own false colors you should
wear!

THREE SCORE AND TEN:

 HE path has been stony
and rough,
And of joy there has
ne'er been enough;
But abundance of hard-
ships and woes
From the opening unto the close.
But no longer I rail at fair Hope,
Nor tug at stern Destiny's rope;
But gather the flowers each day,
That I chance to find in my way:
And drink in the birds' sweetest
song,

As slowly I struggle along.
And my heart still is happy and
bold,
And I still seek the big pot of
gold.

But not on this side of the stream
Am I looking to catch its bright
gleam.

As across the dark river I gaze,
I can see through the mist and
the haze

The far end of the bow as it
gleams

With the light-from the heaven-
ly beams;

And I know in that Garden, so
old

I shall find the long-sought Pot
of Gold.



A HAMMOCK REVERIE.

HERE in my hammock, swinging light,
As if afloat on some clear stream,
Spellbound I lie, and idly dream,
Lull'd by soft breezes of the night.

The proud trees toss their heads, and sweep
A courtesy to the Queen of Night.

I fain would be a fairy wight
To slide adown the moonbeams steep.

To swing upon the topmost limb,
Far out into the shining air;
I'd follow thee, O Moon so fair,
From brightest spheres to regions dim.

Or I would be yon filmy cloud,
That sails with thee so swittly by;
So 'round the world we two could fly,
Along with night the sombre-browed.

Or let me be thine owlet, Love,
That hiding darkly sings "Goo-hoo!
I love but you! I love but you!
Beam kindly on me from above."

Thus, in my hammock, swinging light,
I dream beneath the magic rays,
Till sleep her finger on me lays,
And shuts thine image from my sight.

November
Leaves

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NOVEMBER LEAVES



O H dear dead leaves of a dear
dead past,
When the joy of living was at
its height!
As, fluttering in the autumn
blast;
You seek Earth's bosom in shivering fright.
I vaguely wonder if that dear past
Held all of joy that was meant for me;
If summers to come will speed as fast
As that brief season of ecstasy?
Will next year come as a glad full year,
With its buds and blossoms, and golden
sheaves?
Or, coming with ghosts of mem'ries dear,
Bring but a garland of withered leaves?

PUSSY WILLOW

A

MAIDEN fair without a care
Came tripping o'er the hill-o.
Her eye was bright, her heart
was light
As the foam upon the billow.

She trilled a song as she sped along,
In young life's joyous morning,
While in her heart, like a thing apart;
Love's tender light was dawning.
The time was spring, and on the wing
Birds to their mates were calling;
And white and round upon the ground
The cherry blooms were falling.
Thus, blithe and gay, she went her way,
And came unto the mill-o,
Where tender green with silver sheen,
Wild grew the Pussy Willow.

❧ ❧ ❧ ❧

A gallant youth with eyes of truth
Rode gaily o'er the hill-o;

And came to where the maiden fair
Sat dreaming by the mill-o.

He left his horse to crop the gorse
That grew along the hill-o,
And found his way without delay
To her side beneath the willow.

He kissed her twice, he kissed her thrice,
Two young hearts felt a thrill-o;
While tender green with silver sheen
Bright glowed the Pussy Willow.

But with quick pride she drew aside;
And smote him with a will-o..
Rough flows the stream of love's young
dream;
Sad drooped the Pussy Willow.

Then with air so grand he kissed her hand
She could not say him nil-o;
And so they both did plight their troth
Beside the Pussy Willow.



A SONG OF EVENTIDE

FROM their haunts among the meadows,

Hear the cricket's good night call!
See the fireflies gem the shadows,
Flash and hold high carnival!
Little magic torches they
To light the fairies on their way.

Softly, softly creeps the twilight,
Silently the shadows fall;
See the round moon climb the hilltops,
Trailing wierdly over all
The sleeping earth a ghostly pall.
Away up in the heavens so far,
Shines one lonely little star.

Fair head on my breast reclining,
Nestle close the while I sing;
Baby arms my neck entwining,
Make for me a magic ring
Round which sweetest fancies cling.
Happy angels ling'ring nigh,
Chant for thee a lullaby!
Moonbeams kiss thine eyelids down
O'er thy heavy eyes of brown.

THE BROWN EYES OF MY DEARY

O H the brown eyes of my deary
Shine across my pathway dreary
With a glance so bright and cheery,
Just like twin stars from above.
Their warm depths are full of splendor
And their glances are so tender
That the fires in them engender
Strange, sweet images of love.

Oh, the brown eyes of my deary,
I believe them without query,
And I never, never weary
Of their glances fond and true.
They can flash with firm decision,
Or can sparkle with derision;
I can see them in my vision,
And they thrill me through and through

CHORUS:

Oh the eyes of brown are the eyes of love,
Steadfast and true as the stars above.
Those are the eyes that were made to woo;
None in the world so tender and true.

THE VOICES OF THE LEAVES

How I love to lie and listen
 To the voices of the leaves,
As they sway and dance and glisten,
 While the sunlight thro' them weaves
Now a thousand shifting patterns
 On the ground below the eaves.

How delightedly they clatter
 From their perch upon the trees;
And how lovingly they chatter
 Nodding, glancing winsomely;
How their innocent abandon
 Helps to cheer and comfort me!

Hear them whisper in the moonlight
 Of the great earth's mysteries!
Secrets of the merry June night,
 How they fling them to the breeze!
But so softly that no mortal
 Ever understands or sees.

Save the soul, that nigh to falling
 From great heights to soundless deeps,
Listens to them calling, calling:
 "God the Father never sleeps,
But from out the starless spaces
 Watchful care above us keeps."

Happy leaves above me swaying,
Shadows dancing at my feet!
Now I hear your voices saying:
"Life and love forever meet!"
From the Mother arms that rock you
Comes the murmur: "Life is sweet."



WE TWO

Howe'er, where'er we two may chance to
 roam,
No matter if it be on solid land,
Or on the great uncertain sea,
Or should those strange ships of the air
Become our bearers to some far-off strand,
Still, heart to heart, and hand in hand, we two
Will rove content the wide world thro' and thro'.
Where'er we chance to stray our home
 shall be;
Nor ever shall our spirits feel unrest,
Nor seek, in discontent, to find
Another heart, or other home more blest;
But in each other find our world---our home,
Howe'er, where'er we two may chance to roam.



L'AMITIE



O

TRUEST friend of that day,
long gone by:

How tender-sweet those times
when you and I

Roamed the still wood, or sat
'neath spreading tree,

When the days were full of
golden hours

For you and me.

None knew that secret trysting-place of ours;
None, save the bees, that droned amid the
flowers;

Or song birds twittering in the gnarled tree,
Whose waving branch so oft did shelter
You and me.

Our young hearts knew no shadow in their
dream;

Our young lives flowed on like that quiet
stream

Which gently rippled past our trysting tree,

While we sweet converse held, or laughed
In girlish glee.
Till love's young demon came upon the
scene,
With poison-tipped arrows, tinged with
green,
And changed it all for you and me; the tie
That held us twain; asunder fell—
Oh day gone by!

Our bluest sky then changed to dullest gray;
Our brooklet no more trilled its joyous lay.
The song birds chattered angrily; while
brown
And bare the sighing branches shivered.
Bending down.

I loved him first, but he n'er thought of me,
Till, weary of your love and loyalty,
He sought distraction in another face,
And saw in me his ideal of beauty
And of grace.

You thought me false, because for one
brief spell,
After your parting and your last farewell
I basked me in the sunshine of his smile,
Without the faintest thought of treach'ry,
Or of guile.

But when he spoke I saw how it must seem,
And why my sun must set, and that no
beam
From him could light me on my dreary way;
That heav'n had vanished; all was dark!
Oh weary day!

Then shame despair and anger in me burned
His proffered love in hot disdain I spurned;
And as he, white-faced, sprang unto his feet,
I mocked him there with lying lips;
Oh, bitter-sweet!

Oh, day of horror, ne'er to be effaced
From mem'ry's page! And life how drear a
waste,
Since that dread hour, when o'er his mang-
led clay
We stood! You, unrelenting,
Turned away!

And I! I could not speak, for shame and
pride;
For struggling with the love I fain would
hide!
So drifted we apart; our sev'ral ways
We went, and knew no more the love
Of former days.

Now, after all these saddened years, my
Nell,
We meet again; there's nothing more to tell.
Here at our Martyr's grave let's pledge anew
The girlish love so long estranged
From me and you.

CLARIBEL

CLARIBEL, my Claribel:
Sweetest wild rose of the dell,
Knowest thou I love thee well?
Tender is thy heart, and true.
Fresher than the morning dew
Are thy lips of scarlet hue.

Soft and dark as summer's night
Are thine eyes, whose wondrous light
Thrills me with a mad delight.
With their sweet voluptuous glance,
Making all my pulses dance,
Holding me as in a trance.

Dusky locks thy brow embrace;
Sweeping lashes seek to grace
The ivory paleness of thy face.
Lilies in thy curved cheek dwell,
Hiding what they dare not tell—
The soul's white flame, my Claribel.

ILLUMINATION



T

WAS only yesterday I thought
you false.

I counted you no better than
the rest.

Who came to woo my fortune
and estate,

Yet would have given up all
that I possess'd.

To know the *truth* - my *good* or *evil* fate!

Today at noon I wandered forth
Thro' meadows where the soft-eyed cattle
graze,

Past thickets where the night birds sit and
dream,

And sat me down where willows wave and
dip

Their branches in the quiet cooling stream.

The idle locusts din'd their drowsy song
In measured cadence on the heated air;
And birds skim'd noiselessly across the
blue;

A loud-voiced bee the modest clover wooed.

A yellow dandelion here and there
Nodded his golden head in simple glee,
And laughed at his old grandsire's hoary
locks,
Blown by the errant wind across the lea.

Lull'd by these many symphonies, I slept,
And, dreaming, felt, unseen, your presence
near;
Beheld your eyes, aglow with deep desire,
Now mirrored in the streamlet at my feet.

Dumb creatures of the wood and meadow
came,
And all stood up before me without fear;
A silent group, with steadfast; wistful eyes,
That seemed at once to chide and to entreat.

These vanished, and from overhead
A song of whirring wings now smote the
air.
From empyrean heights a snow white dove
Flew straight into my breast, and nestled
there.

A flood of peace enveloped all my soul,
And so I knew that henceforth love was
mine,
And, looking up, beheld your eyes of blue,

Through which the spirit in you glowed
divine,
Compelling, loyal, tender, true.

I woke. The sun in heaven was low.
His slanted beams in shimmering splendor
lay
Athwart the trees, the meadow slope, the
stream,
And all the air proclaimed a golden day,
And whispered soft: "How fair, how true a
dream!"

MARCH

W

HO born in Lent is hated of all
flesh,"

So runs the adage, old as Lent it-
self.

W

But this is not the reason why, Sir
March,

Poor shivering mortals dread your
coming so,

And long to see you "laid upon the shelf."
Too young in years, my boy; too old in heart

To sympathize with flesh, you go your head-
long way
Unmoved by censure, dubbed a crank by all,
You neither mend your ways nor hasten to
depart.

But if we hate your roughness and the sting
Your biting airs impart to our frail bones,
We more admire the courage which you
bring
To carry out your mission, and the strength,
The dauntless will, the high resolve to make
The earth a fitting place for Spring's fair
Queen
To work in, and to coax with smiles and
tears
The dormant soul of Nature to awake.

The Warrior King you are of all the year;
The bravest and the brawniest of the band.
A minstrel, too, of no mean power, you
come
With sound of pipe, with twang of harp;
with hand
That tunes the mighty strings to wild, ex-
ultant strains,
While wielding sceptre high o'er all the
waiting land.



Our Garden



THE Freshness of the gardens,
In the cool air of the morning!
As they offer up the incense
From a thousand scented blossoms,
To the Sun-God as he rises in
the heavens.

O, the beauty of the roses,
Basking in the glorious sunshine
Of a golden day in June!
And the sweetness of the lilies, in the dusky
shades of evening,
With their hearts of gold reflected in the
glimpses of the moon!

Children, listen to my story; once your father
had a garden,
In the which he toiled and pottered.
First he dug and then he planted; then
most carefully he watered,

Till these children of his fancy grew and
 blossowed into beauty,
 Like to flowers of Paradise.
Every morning, every evening, with a care
 that never slackened;
With a zest that grew to passion, labored he
 among these beauties;
 Watched their growth with loving eyes.

One there was that watched his labors,
 squatting flat among the spaces
Made by stems of these sweet flow'rets;
Keeping close within their shadows; brown
 as the earth to which he cuddled;
Noiseless as the creeping wormlet, boring in
 the earth beneath him;
Silent as the air about him, motionless as
 bronz-ed sphinx,
Save when his threadlike tongue, outdart-
 ing, catches some unwary insect
 In its cryptic mazy kinks.

Stared with eyes that scintillated with the
 fireflash and the sparkle
Of the legendary jewel in his ancient, warty
 head;

Blinked as one who ponders sagely, winked
as to himself and said:

"All this labor's for my comfort,
And this bustling, busy fellow---
Why, I do not even *know* him,
Am not e'en on speaking terms with---
Yet he builds for me this grotto,
Wherein I may live forever,
Within easy reach of food!
Now I feel as if I ought to
Something do for this fine fellow,
And show forth my gratitude.
I will call my friends together:
Hop the Jumper, Bill the Swallower,
Puff the Blower, and their kinsfolk.
We will study up the weather,
And on eve of rainy morrow
We will thereupon assemble
And parade along the pathway,
So warning him of coming rain.
Thus will he be saved much labor;
This indeed will be a blessing."

Thus did the Toad repay your father; and
by this faithful loving service
Lived undisturbed amid the spaces, made by
the stems of these sweet flow'rets;

And through the golden days of summer,
Dozed and dreamed the hours away.

Moral:

*The precious jewel in the eyes
Reflects where loving service lies,
And brightens every load.
No Toad should be without its Garden,
No Garden be without its Toad.*

MUSINGS

HERE in the dead of night,
Or in the watchful morn,
Before God brings the light,
Or ere the day is born,
Will she, thinkst thou, come in to see
If all is well with thee?

*"I must have wandered far
Since I began to roam
From that bright distant star
Which was my native home;
For I can neither feel nor hear
Aught from that distant sphere."*

The babe just come to earth,
Did angel guards attend her?
I think not; at her birth
None of them did befriend her,
For then she gave a cry of fright,
Like one hurled from a height.

*"I must have wandered long,
My face has grown so old.
The years before me throng,
Their memories I still hold,
Of all their busy days of yore,
So full of youthful lore."*

Yes, in the silent night,
Or in the watchful morn;
Before God sends the light,
Before the day is born,
Thy mother, Sweet, will come to see
If all is well with thee.



Dawn in the City

W

HO is it that, with eyes of soft-
est gray,
Peers through the sable fringes
of the night;
And slowly pushing each dark
strand away,
Grows with each onward step
more bright?

Aurora, peerless daughter of the Sun,

Why waste the glories of your pageantry
On sightless buildings, piles of soulless
stones;

Dull monuments of Industry?

Fresh as an infant, when his sleep is done,
Thou comest, at the first faint call of
morn.

Ere mighty Sol begins his daily run,
Thou dost the eastern sky adorn.

"The child at prayer beside his mother's
knee

Becomes a seraph; lighted by my glow.
The face of age, illumin-ed by me,
No trace of sorrow seems to know.

"The poet's fantasy, the artist's skill,
Have sung and pictured me in every land.
With soft veiled lightning-flash I flood and
thrill
The bosom of the ice-bound strand.

"And yet I deem it sweeter far to rove
Amid the garish monuments of men;
To seek, with gentle ministry of love,
In palaces, or in crowded den

"The restless sufferer, tossing through the
night,
The aching heart of sorrow's sleepless
child;
And soothed to rest by my caressing light,
And into dreamless slumber thus beguiled

"The wight who toils from rise to set of sun,
Dreams on, through all the solemn, silent
dark,
Till, gliding in, like some gray-hooded nun,
I bring the music of the lark."

THE WEE WITCH WOMAN

HE is cunning and petite,
With a waist so trim and neat,
And the slimmest hands and feet!
 Hands that beckon
 Forth, I reckon,
 Spirits fair
 From distant air.
Feet that glide in "woven paces,"
To and fro, and leave no traces.
Unknown words, like voice of birds,
Conjuring up misty faces.
 Over there is the chair
 Into which I sit and stare
 At the Witch, so wierd and fair;
 Till my eyes
 Fall downwise;
 And my head
 Drops like lead
 On my breast,
 In blissful rest.
And I sink, and sink down deep,
 Into dreamless sleep.
 While the Witch,
 From a niche,

Takes a silken switch,
With perfume rich,
And softly waves it to and fro,
While downy things,
Like angels' wings,
Enfold me in their slumb'rous rings;
And all my senses steep
In oblivion deep.

THE DARK HOUR

I MISS thee most in that dark hour,
Ere yet the dawn creeps up the
eastern sky,
Or young birds, half awak'ning
from their sleep,
Begin to chant old matins drowsily.

That is the hour when Memory, unsealed,
Shows me half-buried images and scenes;
Lost loves that come and vanish, half re-
vealed,
Like dreams that mock us with their fan-
tasies.

These forms, like pictures on a screen un-
furled,
Change oft, pursued by that dread phan-
tom, Fear,

Till glorious Morn, sweet mother of the
world,
Steals in upon me, beaming tenderly.

In that lone hour my soul grows weak, and
longs
To feel the warmth and comfort of thy
love;
And in that shelter, free from haunting
throngs,
Await with thee the dawning, peacefully.

WHERE MY LOVE LIES LOW

O H I know, yes I know
Where my Love is lying low.
And 'tis there I love to go
When the shadows on the hill
Creep and lengthen, as they will;
Where my Love lies low.

Where my Love is lying low,
There the purple violets grow,
Yellow dandelions glow,
And as soon as day's begun

Lift happy faces to the sun,
Where my Love lies low.


Oh, I know, yes I know
How the brooklet sings below
Where my Love is lying low.
And how merrily the trees
Wave their long arms in the breeze,
Where my Love lies low.

Where my Love is lying low
Drowsy insects come and go,
Butterflies flit to and fro;
Crickets, hiding in the grass,
Chirrup gaily as I pass,
Where my Love lies low.

Oh, I know, yes I know
Where my Love is lying low.
There the night winds gently blow
On the hillside; looking down
On the hushed and sleeping town,
There my Love lies low.

THE LAMENT OF THE MAINE

On the raising of the U. S. S. *Maine* from the bottom of
Havana Harbor, January, 1912


HY did ye leave us so long,
Me and my faithful band,
O men of the loyal hearts
and strong,
With never a helping
hand?
Ye freed the living, why
not the dead?
Why did ye not *then* set them free?
Why, oh why did ye make of me
Naught but a charnel-house under
the sea?

I tried my brave ones to keep,
As we sank to our muddy rest;
And held them close as they fell
asleep
Upon my shattered breast.
After the living come the dead,
Why did ye not *then* set them free?
Why, O Men, did ye make of me
Naught but a charnel-house, under
the sea?

Long years did I watch them in awe,
As they nodded and stared at me;
Bloated, rotten and shrunken, I saw
Their flesh melt into the sea.
Still I nursed the bones of that faith-
ful band,
With arms tight-pinioned in the sand
Ah, woe is me, that I should be
Naught but a charnel-house, under
the sea!

And now ye would rob me of these,
The bones I cherished so long,
That once wore flesh and fought on
the seas,
With me, when my ribs were strong.
Now that the tears have all been shed
Render up to the mourners their
dead;
Bury me where there is none to weep:
Six hundred fathoms in the deep!

The Dying Moor



TOLD my love beheath the tall
date palm,
That reaches upward to the
watchful sky.
O'er the still land fell night's
soft brooding calm;
The rising moon gleamed like
a silver scythe
In a broad field of azure set.
Light zephyrs stirred the air with od'rous
balm.
Each star set in the jewelled belt of heaven
Did seem to twinkle with approving ray,
Bidding godspeed to love and me.
My Zelda, her soft eyes now lit with fire,
Stole from the sacred altars of the Gods,
Now deeply dark with unsolved mysteries,
Seemed dumb before my wondrous tale of
love,
While in each change her soul stood forth.

Her white veil shimmered like a silver mist
Beneath the blue dome of the circling skies.
Her fair hair by the mellow moonbeams
kissed,

Enhanced the dark'ning splendor of her eyes
All glowing with love's ecstasy.

Ah, Hassan's steel a bitter flavor had!

As, driven by his vengeance-seeking aim,
It clove a bloody pathway thro' my side,
Leaving me of all sense bereft.

But not for long I lay there like one dead,
For did not Zelda's shriek ring in my ears
And nerve me to shake off that rigid grasp
That strove to drag my fainting soul away
From a fair world of life and love!

What if I stole her from him? She was mine
By right of her sweet will and perfect love.
My soul it will not rest in Paradise
Till it doth look upon her face!

Oh Allah, grant my prayer, and leave me
free

To seek mine enemy throughout the world!
No matter in what form of bird or beast,
Or e'en of serpent, so that I may find
My enemy, and my lost love!

Then ho for Hassan's blood! And after that,
In lowly shape to be content for aye
In her sweet presence to exist!



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